THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) and (b) Suggestions received for streamlining the functioning of the DDA are under the consideration of Government.

National Overseas Scholarship Scheme

386. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made an assessment of the working of the National Overseas Schoolarship Scheme for Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes and other weaker sections of the society;

(b) whether it is a fact that many students are unable to complete their studies within the prescribed time limit; and

(c) what is the number of students of this country who went abroad under the Scheme so far and what is the number of such students who have not returned to India as per the terms of the agreement?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF WELFARE (SHRI GIRIDHAR GOMANGO): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) So far 359 scholars have gone abroad under the scheme and 58 of them have not returned to India as per terms of agreement.

Assessment of farm extension

387. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any assessment and review have been made of the progress of the farm extension programme in various States; and

(b) if so, the results thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The results of various reviews and studies reveal that there has been perceptible impact of the farm extension system in systematising transfer of relevant farm technology, introducing new crops and cropping patterns and popularising use of various inputs leading to overall increase in farm productivity.

These studies and reviews have shown that (i) about 80 per cent of the contact farmers and 50 per cent of non-contact farmers know their Village Extension Workers (VEW), (ii) there is no systematic and significant farm-size bias in VEW visits, and (iii) substantial number of farmers find VEW advice useful. The need for (i) improvement of the role of middle level extension functionaries, (ii) streamlining of adaptive research programmes, (iii) reduction of non-extension activities of extension workers, (iv) establishment of better linkage of extension services with research and other line departments, (v) provision of adequate budgetary support, (vi) better extension cadre management and (vii) greater infrastructural support to the extension system have been indicated in these reviews and studies.

These findings relate to those States where farm extension has been systematised on the Training and Visit pattern, with an in-built mechanism of reviewing progress. The States of Tripura, Manipur, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, and Sikkim have not been covered under this pattern.

Additional allocation of edible oil to Vanaspati Industry

388. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the recent decision of Government to reduce supply of imported edible oil to ten per cent to the Vanaspati industry has led to escalation in the prices of Vanaspati and other edible oil;

(b) whether Government have received any memorandum from the Indian Vanaspati Producers' Association for additional allocation of imported edible oil to maintain its output to meet the demands of the public distribution system; and